

## Message Text

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PAGE 01 THE HA 01983 011625 Z

51

ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 PA-03

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P 011600 Z MAY 73

FM AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1200

UNCLAS THE HAGUE 1983

FOR EUR/ WE

E. O. 11652: N/ A

TAGS: PGOV, OGEN, NL

SUBJECT: MAY FOURTH CEREMONY IN ZOETERMEER

REF: STATE 079078

1. THE STORY OF STAFF SERGEANT JOHN E. MCCORMICK, JR. AND HIS GRAVE IN ZOETERMEER IS WELL KNOWN TO DAO, PARTICULARLY AIRA, AND THE MAAG. AIRA HAS VISITED PUBLIC RELATIONS OFFICER OF CITY OF ZOETERMEER AND HAS HAD SEVERAL LENGTHY CONVERSATIONS WITH MRS. AKKERMAN WHO PROFESSES TO BE U. S. CITIZEN MARRIED TO A DUTCHMAN. MAAG GAVE AMERICAN FLAG TO MRS. AKKERMAN SOME MONTHS AGO.
2. AIRA HAS RECEIVED INVITATION DATED APRIL 26, FROM MAYOR WEGSTAPEL OF ZOETERMEER TO LAY WREATH AT CEREMONY AT 2000 HOURS ON MAY 4 WHICH IS NETHS NATIONAL MEMORIAL DAY FOR WARDEAD. AIRA HAS PREVIOUS SIMILAR COMMITMENT; SO EMBASSY WILL BE REPRESENTED BY COL. L. ERIKSON, USAF, CHIEF AIR SECTION, MAAG. A PHOTOGRAPHER WILL BE PRESENT, AND PHOTOS WILL BE FORWARDED TO DAVE LOVING, AS REQUESTED.
3. FYI: WE FIND IT SOMEWHAT STRANGE THAT THERE IS SUCH INTEREST ON THE PART OF CITY OF ZOETERMEER AFTER ALL THESE YEARS. WE BELIEVE THIS

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INTEREST DEVELOPED IN PART BECAUSE OF PERSISTENT PRESSURE BY MR. AKKERMAN, AND IN PART BY A VISIT TO THE GRAVESITE ABOUT A YEAR AGO BY A PROMINENT CITIZEN OF SCRANTON WHO REPORTEDLY TALKED OF THE POSSIBILITY OF CONTRIBUTIONS FROM THE PEOPLE OF SCRANTON TOWARD THE CONSTRUCTION OF A MCCORMICK MEMORIAL HOSPITAL IN ZOETERMEER. WE ARE ALSO SOMEWHAT SURPRISED AT MAYOR PETERS' ACTION, AS MRS. AKKERMAN ADVISED AIRA SHE WAS QUITE DISILLUSIONED AND UPSET OVER THE COOL TREATMENT SHE RECEIVED IN SCRANTON DURING A VISIT THERE IN JANUARY OF THIS YEAR.

4. WE AGREE WITH DESIRABILITY OF REPRESENTATION THIS YEAR BUT ARE RELUCTANT TO ESTABLISH THIS AS AN ANNUAL EVENT IN VIEW OF TIME ELAPSED SINCE WW II AND MAJOR EMBASSY PROGRAM COMMEMORATING ALL US WAR DEAD AT THE US MILITARY CEREMONY IN MARGRATEN ON OUR OWN MEMORIAL DAY. ALSO, NEITHER EMBASSY NOR DAO IS PROVIDED WITH FUNDS TO DEFRAY COST OF WREATHS FOR INDIVIDUAL CEREMONIES SUCH AS THAT AT ZOETERMEER, THOUGH IT WAS POSSIBLE TO FIND MONEY FOR WREATH THIS YEAR. END FYI.  
MIDDENDORF

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NMAFVVZCZ

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